

Week Ending Friday, April 25, 1997

**Letter to the Oklahoma City
Memorial Foundation**

April 14, 1997

Dear Friends:

Our nation will never forget that tragic day, almost two years ago, when we first learned of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, and we will always remember the courage shown by the citizens of your strong and united city during that dark time. All Americans continue to support your recovery efforts, and our prayers are with you.

With the destruction of the Murrah Federal Building, we learned once again that America is a family, and that such a brutal attack on any American is an attack on us all. In uniting around the citizens of Oklahoma City, our nation proved once again that no force of hatred or terrorism can ever defeat the American spirit.

I want to express my support for your efforts to establish a memorial on the site of the bombing. This memorial will be a fitting tribute not only to those who died, but also to those whose lives were changed forever on April 19, 1995. I know that, by honoring our fellow Americans in this way, we can help to further the healing and restore hope for a brighter, more secure future.

Hillary and I will always remember the time we spent with the families and survivors. Please know that we are keeping them, and all the people of Oklahoma City, in our thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 19. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

**Memorandum on Expanding Access
to Internet-based Educational
Resources for Children, Teachers,
and Parents**

April 18, 1997

*Memorandum for the Heads of Executive
Departments and Agencies*

*Subject: Expanding Access to Internet-based
Educational Resources for Children,
Teachers, and Parents*

My number one priority for the next 4 years is to make sure that all Americans have the best education in the world.

One of the goals of my Call to Action for American Education is to bring the power of the Information Age into all of our schools. This will require connecting every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000; making sure that every child has access to modern, multimedia computers; giving teachers the training they need to be as comfortable with the computer as they are with the chalkboard; and increasing the availability of high-quality educational content. When America meets the challenge of making every child technologically literate, children in rural towns, the suburbs, and inner city schools will have the same access to the same universe of knowledge.

I believe that Federal agencies can make a significant contribution to expanding this universe of knowledge. Some agencies have already launched a number of exciting projects in this area. The White House has a special "White House for Kids" home page with information on the history of the White House. NASA's K-12 initiative allows students to interact with astronauts and to share in the excitement of scientific pursuits such as the exploration of Mars and Jupiter and with experiments conducted on the Space Shuttle. The AskERIC service (Education Resources Information Center), supported by the Department of Education, has a vir-

tual library of more than 900 lesson plans for K–12 teachers, and provides answers to questions from educators within 48 hours—using a nationwide network of experts and databases of the latest research. Students participating in the Vice President’s GLOBE project (Global Learning and Observation for a Better Environment) collect actual atmospheric, aquatic, and biological data and use the Internet to share, analyze, and discuss the data with scientists and students all over the world. With support from the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Defense’s CAETI program (Computer-Aided Education and Training Initiative), the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory has developed a program that allows high school students to request and download their own observations of the universe from professional telescopes.

We can and should do more, however. Over the next 3 months, you should determine what resources you can make available that would enrich the Internet as a tool for teaching and learning, and produce and make available a new or expanded version of your service within 6 months.

You should use the following guidelines to support this initiative:

- Consider a broad range of educational resources, including multimedia publications, archives of primary documents, networked scientific instruments such as telescopes and supercomputers, and employees willing to serve as tele-mentors or answer student and teacher questions.
- Expand access not only to the information and other resources generated internally, but by the broader community of people and institutions that your agency works with and supports. For example, science agencies should pursue partnerships with professional societies, universities, and researchers to expand K–12 access to scientific resources.
- Update and improve your services in response to comments from teachers and students, and encourage educators to submit curricula and lesson plans that they have developed using agency material.

- Focus on the identification and development of high-quality educational resources that promote high standards of teaching and learning in core subjects. Of particular importance are resources that will help students read well and independently by 4th grade, and master challenging mathematics, including algebra and geometry, by 8th grade.
- Make sure the material you develop is accessible to people with disabilities. Earlier this month, I announced my support for the Web Accessibility Initiative, a public-private partnership that will make it easier for people with disabilities to use the World Wide Web.

I am also directing the Department of Education to develop a “Parents Guide to the Internet,” that will explain the educational benefits of this exciting resource, as well as steps that parents can take to minimize the risks associated with the Internet, such as access to material that is inappropriate for children.

The Department of Education will also be responsible for chairing an interagency working group to coordinate this initiative to ensure that the agency-created material is of high quality, is easily accessible, and promotes awareness of Internet-based educational resources among teachers, parents, and students.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 19.

The President’s Radio Address

April 19, 1997

The President. Good morning. Vice President Gore and I are here in the Oval Office on the second national NetDay, when citizens and communities all across America come together to help us meet the goal of connecting every classroom and library in the United States to the Internet by the year 2000. With us today are three AmeriCorps members, two local high school students, and two Communication Workers of America volunteers, all of whom are contributing to this effort.